KC 44-760
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The following investigation was conducted by SA [redacted]

AT JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI:

On April 29, 1968, a former inmate of the Missouri State Penitentiary advised as follows:

He knew JAMES EARL RAY at the Missouri State Penitentiary (MSP). From his conversations with RAY, he learned that RAY's maximum ambition in life was to make a "score" of about $20 - $30,000.00, after which he would go to Mexico to "hide out", living simply on the loot at the favorable Mexican exchange rate. RAY had spoken to him about his previous trips to Mexico, following "two or three" armed robberies, involving small scores, where he would "cool off" and live on beer, beans and milk. RAY spoke of Campeche Bay, near the Yucatan Peninsula, and he spoke of living with peasants on the outskirts of the town of Campeche, Mexico. RAY also spoke of a cheap "red light district" he favored located in the town of Torreon or Torrejon (phonetic), which the former MSP inmate thought was located in north central Mexico. Cost was a factor in anything RAY did, and he apparently lived frugally and budgeted his money carefully.

RAY did not like Negroes in general, but he expressed no particular feeling toward MARTIN LUTHER KING, although he has heard RAY refer to Dr. KING as "MARTIN LUTHER COON". RAY read enthusiastically, especially the weekly news magazines available at the MSP, and he would react in an outspoken manner opposing H. RAP BROWN and STOKELY CARMICHAEL when he read of their activities, as well as in opposition to publicity Dr. KING received in certain instances.

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The former MSP inmate never heard of any bounty mentioned with regard to Dr. KING at the MSP or elsewhere. He believes he has heard RAY speculate that there might be some money available through some splinter group for the murder of BROWN or CARMICHAEL, but he never heard him speak in this regard about Dr. KING. RAY did not mention specific groups or any knowledge of any real payoff information. He recalls RAY's telling him, during the time [redacted] that while he was on the minor construction detail at the MSP, one of the guards referred to the Negro inmates working on the detail as "boy", and the Negroes went on a "sit-down" strike, and induced about two of the white inmates to join their strike, and when one of the Negroes referred to RAY as "gray", he got into a fight with that inmate, although the prison officials never learned of the fight, and the former MSP inmate's knowledge of the fight was as a result of RAY's telling him, and he does not know whether or not it is true.

RAY was a hypochondriac in that he took six or seven different kinds of pills daily, imagining that he had a "cranial depression" and a "rapid palpitation of the heart". He would use former inmate's watch with a second hand and time his pulse. He was able to obtain "pills" from going on sick call as well as through inmate sources in the MSP. The former inmate had some pills he had obtained for treatment of his arthritis, from which he obtained no relief, and RAY took these pills, thinking that he might some day have arthritis, and the pills might ward off future effects of that affliction. He believes RAY was selling amphetamine all the time he was in the MSP, but former inmate does not know his source.

RAY mentioned a traffic for the sale of small appliances in Mexico, due to the tariff Mexicans had to pay for such items they purchased legally, and he spoke of having smuggled such items into Mexico. He said he was acquainted with a man who operated a small scale smuggling business, who lived near the town of Campeche, ~~Mexico~~. RAY mentioned this man so often that former inmate recalls his name: either [redacted] or [redacted], who apparently had lived for some time in the United States, and who spoke English. He believes this is the man RAY referred

to as the owner of a small fishing boat, and he would smuggle things from Brownsville, Texas, into Mexico through Campeche Bay. He believes RAY made trips on this boat with the man, and apparently Mexican Nationals are not checked upon entering Mexico through Campeche Bay in fishing boats. He does not believe RAY could speak Spanish, other than for basic words for basic needs. He heard RAY mention a brother in St. Louis, Missouri, and he believes some of RAY's trips to Mexico were with either the brother or with someone he had participated in armed robberies with, name not given. RAY indicated he had invested a little money in TV sets and washing machines which were transported to Mexico by his friend with the fishing boat. RAY said he had been to Mexico City "a couple of times", and he apparently liked Mexico City, but said it was a "tourist trap", and he could not afford to stay there.

RAY's only reference to working had to do with past bartending jobs. He believes RAY said he had tended bar somewhere in Peoria, Illinois, and at some other town in southern Illinois, exact location not known. He never mentioned Oregon or Canada, that former inmate recalls.

RAY never mentioned to him his plans for escape or specific plans to hide out any particular place, but his conversation indicated he wanted to "make the one big score" and retire in Mexico. He mentioned that he and another man, name not mentioned, drove to Mexico, apparently Campeche, one time, in an old model Chevrolet, specific routes not mentioned. He does not know how RAY made his other trips to Mexico he claimed to have made. He said that he had lived in a rented three-room shack on the outskirts of Campeche, within walking distance of the town, and from his conversation, former inmate gathered that this was during the late 1950's. RAY said he had been in Arizona before, but he did not mention any of the Mexican-United States Border towns, other than Brownsville, Texas.

He recalls RAY mentioned having watched a "fire dance" done by small Negro boys at a hotel in Acapulco, Mexico. He indicated he had not stayed at the hotel where the performance was, since it was too expensive, but stayed at an unnamed cheaper hotel, and he indicated that live coals

were kicked over a cliff into the surf below the hotel, after which the boys would dive into the surf as it rushed through a small inlet.

He recalls RAY once had another inmate, KENNY HURT, or HURTT, in about 1966, send out about $15.00 for him once, purportedly for the purchase of stationery for legal papers. The prison authorities watch inmate expenditures closely and at the time, the inmates were allowed only about $23.00 per month expenditures, but RAY had some income from his illegal activities in prison and needed to conceal the money in other than his own treasury account. HURTT got RAY's money and sent it out to a Mr. and Mrs. _____ (name unrecalled) Stationery Company in St. Louis, Missouri, but no stationery ever came to HURTT, who worried about it and thought it might have been stolen until he was told it would never come, by RAY, who had used HURTT for getting rid of the money without HURTT's knowledge of what he was doing.

Former MSP inmate does not know who RAY might contact, other than the supposed friend at Campeche he named, and he has no knowledge of his whereabouts and no knowledge of his plans to escape, or activities following escape. He does not approve of the murder with which RAY is charged, however, and desired to furnish the above information to help if he can.